

### **Claims**

What is claimed is:

1. An assembly for stiffening a flexible member, the assembly comprising a stiffening member extending over a portion of the flexible member, an adapter secured to the stiffening member and extending over another portion of the flexible member in a spaced relation thereto to form an annulus, and an insert disposed in the annulus.
2. The assembly of claim 1 further comprising a ring connected to an end of the stiffening member, and wherein an end of the adapter is secured to the stiffening member by a weldment extending between the adapter and the ring.
3. The assembly of claim 2 wherein the insert is secured to the adapter and to the ring.
4. The assembly of claim 3 wherein the insert is secured to the adapter and to the ring by a weldment extending between the insert and the adapter, and by a weldment extending between the insert and the ring.
5. The assembly of claim 1 wherein the insert is secured to the adapter.
6. The assembly of claim 5 wherein the insert is secured to the adapter by a weldment extending between the insert and the adapter.
7. The assembly of claim 1 wherein the flexible member is a pipe and wherein the stiffening member, the adapter, and the insert are cylindrical.
8. The assembly of claim 7 wherein the insert is formed by two semi-circular insert

portions.

9. A method for stiffening a flexible member, the method comprising surrounding a portion of the flexible member with a stiffening member, surrounding another portion of the flexible member with an adapter that extends in a spaced relation to the flexible member to form an annulus, securing the adapter to the stiffening member, and inserting an insert into the annulus.

10. The method of claim 9 further comprising connecting a ring to an end of the stiffening member, and wherein the step of securing comprises welding the adapter to the ring.

11. The method of claim 10 further comprising securing the insert to the adapter and to the ring.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein the latter step of securing comprises welding the insert to the adapter and to the ring.

13. The method of claim 9 further comprising securing the insert to the adapter.

14. The method of claim 9 further comprising welding the insert to the adapter.